



City of East Providence  
Roberto L. DaSilva  
Mayor

## **PRESS RELEASE**

February 26, 2021

### **CONTACT INFO. :**

Office of the Mayor  
Patricia Resende  
(401) 529-3207  
presende@eastprovidenceri.gov

## **City celebrates Black History Month with proclamation and employee/official recognition**

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The City of East Providence is celebrating Black History Month, a month that first began as Negro History Week and over time has been celebrated by many as a time to discuss all African- American ethnic groups and their impact on history in this nation.

“The City of East Providence continues to honor the history made by the Black Americans in our community and promises to continue the good and necessary work to achieve racial justice and equity within the City,” Mayor Bob DaSilva said.

There is a long list of influential African Americans who made their mark on society either as dreamers, brave achievers or innovators.

Like Maya Angelou, who despite her trauma as a young girl, found solace in writing. She rose above her own difficult journey and was determined to overcome oppression. She did that through written word, but more importantly, through her action as a civil rights activist.

There was Thurgood Marshall, the first African American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court; Jack Johnson, the first African American man to hold the World Heavyweight boxing title and of course, Freddy Adu, who at the age of 14 became the youngest African American to sign a major league professional contract.

We not only celebrate the long list of influential black men and women, but we remember their sacrifices, their determination and resilience in the face of adversity. This month, the City is also recognizing our Black American staff and elected officials who wanted to participate in the celebration of Black History including:

- **Council President Robert Britto**
- **East Providence Capt. Floyd Gardner**
- **East Providence Firefighter David DaFonseca**
- **East Providence Firefighter Damon Solomon**
- **East Providence Firefighter Edson Evor**
- **Municipal Integrity/Affirmative Action/EEO Officer Elmer Pina**
- **Director of Administration Napoleon Gonsalves**
- **Assistant Fleet Manager Michelle Lopes**
- **Info Systems Tech Felix Fontes**
- **Info Systems Tech Jerry Sullivan**
- **DPW Leadworker Chris Sweeden**
- **Recreation Administrative Assistant Shontell Gomes**
- **City Clerk Typist Lita Garrett**
- **Assistant Superintendent of Facilities Steven Laughlin**
- **Custodian Napoleon DeBarros**





City of East Providence  
Office of the Mayor



Mayoral Proclamation

**"BLACK HISTORY MONTH"**

*WHEREAS, The City of East Providence honors the history and achievements of Black Americans and calls on the members of the community to reflect on the centuries of struggle that have brought this time of reckoning, redemption, and hope; and*

*WHEREAS, It is long past time to confront the deep racial inequities and the systemic racism that continue to plague the nation; and*

*WHEREAS, The City of East Providence honors the history made by the Black Americans in our community and promises to continue the good and necessary work to achieve racial justice and equity within the City; and*

*WHEREAS, The history of Black Americans has been silenced for too long. We shall continue to raise and uplift the voices of our black community members and their ancestors; and*

*WHEREAS, President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976. I ask the citizens of East Providence to continue this tradition and "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." Just as President Ford did; and*

*WHEREAS, After experiencing a period of tragedy in the Nation, East Providence works endlessly to acknowledge and teach the next generations of East Providence citizens, the history of black Americans in order for us to shape a better future for the community.*

*THEREFORE, I, Mayor Roberto L. DaSilva, on behalf of the city of East Providence, proclaim on this day Monday, February 1, 2021 that February is "Black History Month" in the city of East Providence.*

*In recognition whereof I have hereby set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of East Providence to be hereunto affixed this 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2021.*

Roberto L. DaSilva  
Mayor

